

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 28

By Trail

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Lytle "Jug" Landers of the State Election Commission.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Lytle "Jug" Landers; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who was also a close friend and trusted mentor to politicians throughout Bedford County, the State of Tennessee, and this nation; and

WHEREAS, universally recognized as a legend in the Tennessee Democratic Party, Mr. Landers was a vital force in state politics for upwards of fifty years; he offered guidance and friendship to many politicians, including Vice President Al Gore, U.S. Congressmen Bart Gordon and Jim Cooper, and U.S. Senator Jim Sasser, all of whom returned his kindness with the utmost loyalty and respect; and

WHEREAS, the son of former Circuit Court Clerk, W.A. Landers, and Eldine Taylor Landers, Lytle Landers grew up in a world of politics; everyone knew him as "Jug" since he was given the nickname at summer camp at the age of eleven; and

WHEREAS, ever devoted to his country, Lytle "Jug" Landers served with great valor in the United States Marine Corps, and he fought bravely to defend our freedom during the Second World War; and

WHEREAS, considered by his friends and colleagues to be "one of the best Democrats in the world," Mr. Landers entered politics officially in 1951, when he moved to Washington, D.C., to serve on the staff of U.S. Senator Edward McKellar; during his tenure as Enrolling Clerk for the Senate, he was most fortunate to meet Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Jr., John F. Kennedy, Winston Churchill, and General Douglas MacArthur; and

WHEREAS, upon returning to Tennessee from Washington, Mr. Landers worked for four years for a Tullahoma insurance agency until he moved back to Shelbyville, where he opened his own agency on the downtown square; as owner and operator of Lytle Landers Insurance, Mr. Landers was in close proximity to the center of local politics for thirty-five years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers worked tirelessly in many civic endeavors out of a sense of responsibility to his fellow man; and

WHEREAS, for fifteen years, he served dutifully as Foreman of the Bedford County Grand Jury; in such capacity, he earned the admiration of members of both the bench and the bar for his concern for and commitment to justice for the people of Bedford County. He was most proud to serve as Foreman in the very same office in which his father had worked as Circuit Court Clerk; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers served Tennessee as a member of the State Election Commission for more than thirty years, serving as Chair of the Commission several times during his illustrious tenure; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the State Election Commission, Mr. Landers helped to ensure the integrity of elections by preserving the purity of the ballot, and he worked with purpose and persistence to assure fair elections for all Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers twice served as a Delegate to Tennessee Constitutional Conventions; he represented Coffee County in 1959, and Bedford County in 1965; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers served the Tennessee Democratic Party in a number of significant positions, including as a member of the State and Bedford County Democratic

Executive Committees and as a Delegate for the State of Tennessee to the 1964 and 1968 Democratic Conventions; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers was renowned throughout the State for his involvement in the Tennessee Democratic Party, especially for the time, wisdom, and practical advice that he offered to young politicians; a thoughtful and considerate man, he earned the gratitude of many in the Party who regarded him as a surrogate father; and

WHEREAS, in appreciation of his singular work, Lytle "Jug" Landers was widely known as "Mr. Democrat" of Bedford County; and

WHEREAS, having graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from Middle Tennessee State College (now University) in 1950, Mr. Landers remained ever loyal to that institution; he served as National Alumni President in 1969, was named an Outstanding Alumnus in 1974, and served as President of the Middle Tennessee State University Foundation in 1983-1984; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of his service to both Middle Tennessee State University and Tennessee State government, Congressman Jim Cooper honored Mr. Landers in 1992 with the endowment of the Jug Landers Government Scholarship; as of 2001, the scholarship had provided the means to higher education for 19 MTSU students interested in studying the three branches of government at all levels; and

WHEREAS, according to Congressman Bart Gordon, who had been a great friend of Mr. Landers since 1968, when the two worked on Representative John Bragg's congressional campaign together, "Three of his great loves besides his family and church were Bedford County, MTSU, and the Democrat Party. He served all three well."; and

WHEREAS, Lytle "Jug" Landers was deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Lytle "Jug" Landers enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife of over 50 years, the former Jean Wigg, whom he married in 1952; he was the proud father of two sons,

Ben, the President and CEO of the greater Knoxville United Way, and John, an employee with Mercury Records; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers will be remembered fondly for his keen insight, his sharp intelligence, and his wry sense of humor; recalled by Senator Jim Sasser as "a dear friend, a wise counselor, and an institution in Tennessee Democratic politics," he was a Democrat in the most positive sense of the word, and a treasure to the people of Bedford County and the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Landers leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors in politics and public service; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Lytle "Jug" Landers of the State Election Commission, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character as a community leader, public servant, and trusted friend and mentor to politicians throughout this State, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Landers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.